Dear Art, 2/8/75

As I get time today and perhaps tomorrow I'll write you about several things.

Please regard some as delicate by nature and, as with what follows, perhaps without meaning but merely suspicious looking.

I'm happy that during the course of our relationship you have become acquainted with standard directories and know which to consult if the city directory does not yield information.

Some time ago I got an order for Whitewash IV from a man whose letterhead was much less informative than most. Together with other factors I do not now recall they made me wonder about him. He is John C. Elliott and the letterhead may not even be his. The return address on the check in payment, which I've just received, says only "2100 Huntington Drive, Suite 7, San Marino, California, 91108." Envelope, rather. But the check itself is his, "John C. Elliott, San Marino, Calif." The attached, detachable stub is fairly elaborate, with places for "Description," "Amount," Date and "Distributions" broken down into columns headed "Acct. No." and "Amount." In this case the columns are twisted, the entries being where they do not belong. I attribute no meaning to the switching, but the accounting seems a bit elaborate, as the vagueness of the business is in the other direction.

The description reads,"Purchase of book 'WHITEWASH IV" bu Harold Weisberg. On the same line, under "Amount," is the $6.00 price of the book if bought in stores. The bill to him was merely for $6.25, with no breakdown for postage. The cover makes the distinction. Under this in the same column is an entry for the two bits for mailing. On the next line the $6.25 is under account number and the account number,6053, is under the amount. The last typed-in entry is "(Report received by J.C.Elliott)" And both the entry and the fact fascinate when added to whatever caused the initial suspicion.

This guy with the seemingly mysterious need to hide the business he is in buys this book merely because he has received a "report"and has no interest in the earlier books? I sent order forms and he ordered none. The account to which the cost is charged or, if it happened, one they opened for me, is of so large a number? They have more than 6,000 accounts?

Another unusual thing is that my name only was typed in caps on the envelope. This is SOP for cops and spooks but not for businesses or individuals. I can't tell you the last time this happened. I can't remember it ever happening. But typists work automatically when they get adjusted to a style.

All this may mean nothing. Elliott and his associates, if any, may just have their own ways and their own reasons for not saying what they do and getting free ads from their stationery. However, even lawyers commonly identify their profession on stationery.

So, I'm interested in what a directory check discloses about Elliott and that address and if either is productive, associates. I'll be no less interested if the city directory shows nothing. However, the spook covers are commonly listed, which helps them be better covers. And they do get very careless with them and the directories. If you are not familiar with city directories, once you get a business address you can check under the address as well as the name. The address often gives those quartered there, especially with businesses.

I have no objections at all to spooks and other odd types reading my work. I even trust them and advance special handling costs for them. The military command college at Ft. Leavenworth, for example, wanted copies in a rush, sent expensivesly and ordered by phone, with billing instructions and shipping directions verbal. I advanced all the costs, billed them, and two months later got a check.Government. No disguises and no objections. I'm pretty sure I know when and through whom CIA ordered copies. We went out of our way to accomodate, Lesar even making personal delivery to the store, which two months later ordered only a single copy, not normal when the initial order was for more and an odd number as one orders books. The profit to the store was halved with the single order and the overhead increased.

But there are all kinds of spooks, all kinds of businesses and all kinds of lawyers.

Thanks and best,